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PII: S0045-6535(21)01038-9

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chemosphere.2021.130567>

Reference: CHEM 130567

To appear in: *ECSN*

Received Date: 4 December 2020

Revised Date: 5 April 2021

Accepted Date: 10 April 2021

Please cite this article as: Yu, M., Dong, H., Zheng, Y., Liu, W., Ternary Metal Oxide Embedded Carbon Derived from Metal Organic Frameworks for Adsorption of Methylene Blue and Acid Red 73, *Chemosphere*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chemosphere.2021.130567>.

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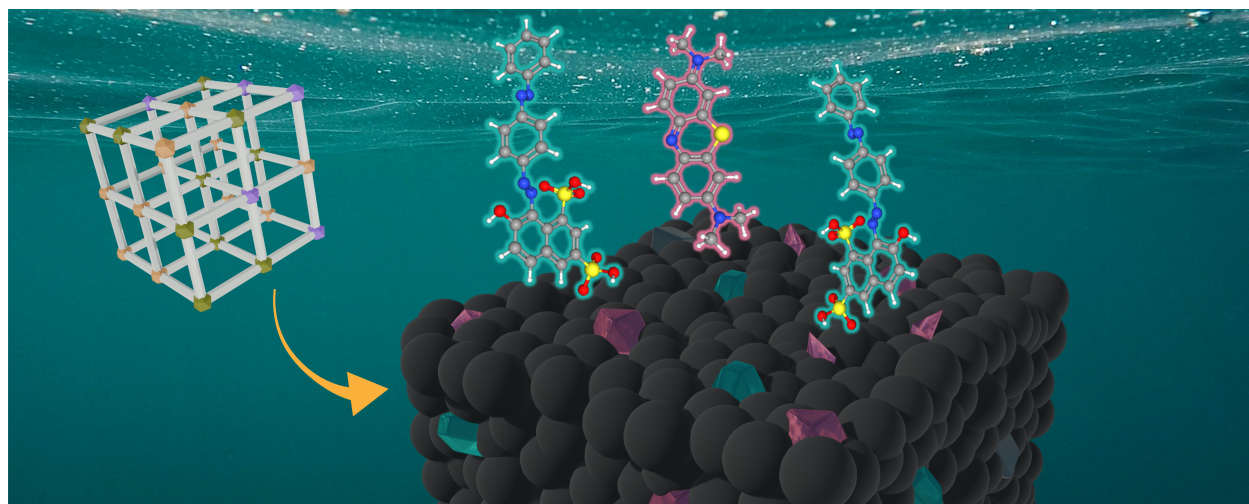
Ternary Metal Oxide Embedded Carbon Derived from Metal Organic Frameworks for Adsorption of Methylene Blue and Acid Red 73

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Author contribution statement

Menglin Yu: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing - review & editing. **Heng Dong:** Investigation, Formal analysis, Writing - Original drafting and validation. **Yingdie Zheng:** Investigation. **Weiping Liu:** Funding acquisition, Resources, Project administration, Supervision.

#M. Yu and H. Dong contributed equally to the work.



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Highlights:

- Metal oxide embedded CMOFs-NH₂ were prepared by pyrolysis of MOF-NH₂ precursors.
- CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had ~20 times higher dye adsorption than AC in 10 min.
- CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ efficiently adsorbed both cationic MB and anionic AR-73.
- Adsorption behavior of CMOFs-NH₂ was well accounted for by surface chemistry.
- A surface model was proposed for the performance of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂.

Abstract

Organic dyes can enter water bodies through industrial wastes and may pose threat to the health of aquatic organisms and human. Metal organic framework derived carbon materials (CMOFs) have shown excellent performance for aqueous dye adsorption. However, few have studied multimetallic CMOFs for dye removal. Herein, a ternary metal oxide embedded carbon derived from amino-modified metal organic framework (CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂) has been developed as an efficient adsorbent to remove aqueous methylene blue (MB) and acid red 73 (AR-73). CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ reached adsorption equilibrium for both MB and AR-73 within 30 min at neutral pH condition. It also achieved 18 and 24 times higher adsorption than commercial activated carbon (AC) in 10 min for MB and AR-73, respectively. Compared to other CMOFs-NH₂, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had the highest adsorption capacity for both cationic MB and anionic AR-73. In addition, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had < 0.15% metal leaching in 90 min in the pH range of 4-10, and it also maintained 89% and 95% adsorption capacity for MB and AR-73 in five consecutive adsorption batches, respectively. Electrostatic interaction was identified as the primary interaction between CMOFs-NH₂ and the dyes, and the embedded crystalline metal oxides with different points of zero charge (PZCs) were identified to be the key adsorption sites. A uniformly distributed surface charge model was proposed to explain the exceptional adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. With fast kinetics, high adsorption capacity, wide applicability and good stability, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ may be an effective adsorbent for many other ionic organic pollutants.

Keywords: Cationic dye; Anionic dye; Fast adsorption; Carbon-based adsorbents; Metal organic

48 frameworks; Ternary metal oxides.

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1. Introduction

Organic dyes, as introduced by painting, textile, electroplating, leather or paper industrial wastewater, are emerging as important aqueous pollutants, posing threat to the health of aquatic organisms and human being due to their solubility, toxicity, possible carcinogenic effects as well as interference of photosynthesis through absorption to incident light (Adeyemo et al., 2012; Katheresan et al., 2018; Kaur et al., 2019; Lellis et al., 2019). For example, methylene blue (MB), a common cationic dye, was found to cause eye irritation, vomiting, mental disorder, and has even been identified as a mutagen and carcinogen (Yao et al., 2010; Zhao et al., 2015; Xu et al., 2016). Common treatment techniques for dye wastewater include biological treatment, adsorption, coagulation, advanced oxidation, membrane filtration and photocatalysis (Gupta, 2009; Yagub et al., 2014; Ahmad et al., 2015). Among these, adsorption has been widely applied because of its high efficiency, low cost, easy and stable operation (Vandevivere et al., 1998; Allen et al., 2004; Yilmaz et al., 2016). In this regard, development of efficient, robust and cost-effective adsorbents is crucial.

So far, a number of adsorbents have been investigated for dye removal, including activated carbon, magnetic metal oxide nanoparticles, zeolite, graphene and graphene oxide (GO), carbon nanotubes (CNTs) (Meshko et al., 2001; Li et al., 2013; Ahmadijokani et al., 2020). Carbon-based materials have gained considerable attention because of their earth abundance, low toxicity as well as outstanding thermal and chemical properties (Pelekani and Snoeyink, 2000; Hameed et al., 2007; Ahmad et al., 2013; Gong et al., 2015). Metal organic frameworks (MOFs), as characterized by rich composition and structure, tunable porosity and large specific surface

area, serve as excellent templates for carbon-based adsorbents (Banerjee et al., 2012). MOF-derived carbon materials were shown to retain the metal centers, pore structure and large specific surface area of the MOF precursors and have found application in removal of aqueous pollutants (Yang et al., 2012; Li et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2020). Nanoporous carbon derived from ZIF-8 and Co-doped nanoporous carbon derived from ZIF-67 have shown good adsorptive performance for methylene blue (Torad et al., 2014; Abbasi et al., 2016). However, most reported adsorption processes on MOF-derived carbon adsorbents (denoted as CMOFs) could take up to several hours (Torad et al., 2014; Abbasi et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2017), leading to potential elevated cost for practical application. On the other hand, bimetallic and trimetallic adsorbents have been shown to have superior performance to their monometallic counterparts because of the synergistic effects of the metals (Wang et al., 2012; Mounfield III et al., 2016), but there have been few reports on multi-metal MOF-derived adsorbents.

Herein, a series of metal-oxide-embedded mesoporous carbon (CMOFs-NH₂) derived from amino-modified MOFs-NH₂ have been developed as efficient adsorbents for removal of cationic dye MB and anionic dye acid red 73 (AR-73). Specifically, various CMOFs-NH₂ were prepared by carbonizing the precursor MOFs-NH₂. Their adsorption performance was examined by adsorption kinetics, isotherms and the influence of ionic strength, temperature and pH. The adsorption mechanism was explored by measuring the Zeta potentials and points of zero charge (PZCs). The stability and reusability were demonstrated by ion leaching tests as well as adsorbent recovery and regeneration experiments. CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ showed excellent adsorption rates for both cationic MB and anionic AR-73. The embedded metal oxides were

identified as important adsorption sites.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Materials

All chemicals were obtained from Sinopharm Chemical Reagent Co. Ltd. and were used without further purification. Solvents were HPLC grade unless otherwise stated. MB and AR-73 with chemical purity $\geq 97.0\%$ (Sinopharm Chemical Reagent Co. Ltd.) were used in this study as model cationic and anionic dyes, respectively, with their structures and pKa given in **Table S1**. Activated carbon (AC, Sigma-Aldrich) was used as a benchmark.

2.2. Preparation of carbonized MOFs-NH₂ (CMOFs-NH₂)

For the synthesis of monometallic precursor MOFs-NH₂, including MIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, MIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and MOF(Ni)-NH₂, 4 mmol metal chloride or nitrate (FeCl₃·6H₂O, Al(NO₃)₃·9H₂O and Ni(NO₃)₂·6H₂O) and 4 mmol 2-aminoterephthalic acid were dissolved in 10 mL N, N-dimethylformamide (DMF) and transferred to a 30-mL microwave tube. The reaction was carried out at 150 °C for 40 min. After returning to room temperature without active cooling, the nanocrystals were separated by centrifugation at 11,000 rpm, washing with DMF and methanol and drying *in vacuo* at 150 °C for 12 h. Synthesis of multimetallic MOFs-NH₂ followed the same procedure except that mixed metal salts were used. Specifically, for bimetallic MOF(X/Y 1/1)-NH₂ (X, Y = Fe/Al/Ni), 2 mmol X and 2 mmol Y salts were used for synthesis. For MOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ and MOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂, FeCl₃·6H₂O, Al(NO₃)₃·9H₂O and Ni(NO₃)₂·6H₂O were used at molar ratios of 8:7:5 and 1:1:1, respectively, while total

amount of Fe, Al and Ni was kept 4 mmol.

The as-synthesized MOFs-NH₂ were pyrolyzed at 800 °C for 2 h in N₂ to produce CMOFs-NH₂. Corresponding to the MOF-NH₂ precursors, CMOFs-NH₂ synthesized in the current study were designated as CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂, CMOF(Ni)-NH₂, CMOF(Fe/Ni 1/1)-NH₂, CMOF(Al/Ni 1/1)-NH₂, CMOF(Fe/Al 1/1)-NH₂, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ and CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂, respectively.

2.3. Material characterization

The morphology of the MOFs-NH₂ and CMOFs-NH₂ was examined using a ZEISS Merlin field-emission scanning electron microscope (FE-SEM) and a FEI Tecnai G² F20 (200 kV) transmission electron microscope (TEM). The metal elemental composition was analyzed with an Oxford INCA X-MAX50 energy dispersive spectrometer (EDS) connected to the SEM. Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) patterns were collected using a Bruker D8 A25 X-ray diffractometer equipped with a Cu-K α radiation ($\lambda=1.5418$ Å) source. The C and O content, as well as the chemical states of the materials were characterized by X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) using Surface Science Instruments Thermo Scientific ESCALAB 250Xi surface spectrometer with monochromatic Al-K α radiation (1486.6 eV). Brunauer-Emmett-Teller (BET) surface area and pore size distribution were determined through nitrogen adsorption and desorption isotherms taken by a gas adsorption instrument (Micromeritics 3Flex). Zeta potentials were recorded with a Zeta-potential analyzer (Nano ZS90, Malvern, UK).

2.4. Adsorption of dyes

All adsorption experiments were carried out at room temperature by adding 10 mg adsorbents

in 100 mL MB or AR-73 solution under continuous stirring at 150 rpm. For adsorption isotherms, 2 mL solution samples were collected after 12 h of contact time. The initial solution pH was adjusted by 1 M NaOH and 1 M H₂SO₄ before adding the adsorbents, while no buffer solution was used to maintain the pH during the adsorption process. The influence of ionic strength changes due to NaOH and H₂SO₄ addition was neglected. The adsorption isotherms were fitted to Langmuir (Equation 1) and Freundlich (Equation 2) models. c_e , q_e and q_m denote equilibrium adsorbate concentration in solution phase, adsorbent phase and the monolayer adsorption capacity, respectively. b is a constant related to free adsorption energy, while K_f and n are empirical constants. A trial-and-error procedure was used to determine the model parameters using the *Nonlinear Curve Fit* module in OriginPro 2018. MB and AR-73 concentrations were determined using a JASCO V-750 spectrophotometer at 508nm and 660nm, respectively. The quantity of AR-73 or MB absorbed onto CMOFs-NH₂ was calculated on the basis of the difference in solution concentration before and after adsorption.

$$c_e/q_e = 1/bq_m + c_e/q_m \quad (1)$$

$$q_e = K_f c_e^{1/n} \quad (2)$$

$$t/q_t = 1/v_0 + t/q_e \quad (3)$$

$$\ln(q_e - q_t) = \ln q_e - k_1 t \quad (4)$$

For kinetic experiments, 1 mL solution samples were collected at certain time intervals. The kinetic data were fitted to pseudo second-order (Equation 3) and pseudo first-order (Equation 4) models. In both Equation 3 and 4, q_e and q_t denote the equilibrium adsorption amount and the amount adsorbed at time t , respectively. v_0 is the initial adsorption rate in Equation 3, and k_1 is

the pseudo first-order rate constant in Equation 4. The model parameters were also determined using *Nonlinear Curve Fit* module of OriginPro 2018.

2.5. Ion leaching tests and regeneration of adsorbents

Ion leaching experiments were performed at room temperature to test the stability of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. Specifically, 0.1 wt% CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ suspensions were prepared and kept stirred at 150 rpm, with aliquots taken at certain time intervals. The suspension pH was adjusted with 1 M NaOH and 1 M H₂SO₄ solution. Leached ion concentration was determined by PerkinElmer NexION™ 300X Inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometer (ICP-MS).

For adsorbent recovery and regeneration, 10 mg adsorbents were firstly suspended in 100 mL circum-neutral 100 mg L⁻¹ AR-73 or MB solution for 12 h at room temperature to reach adsorption equilibrium. The spent adsorbents were subsequently recovered using a magnet and washed gently with milli-Q water (resistivity > 18.2 MΩ cm). Then, they were regenerated by sonication in 40 mL mixture of water/methanol (30/70, v/v) for 1h at room temperature. The regenerated adsorbents were collected by centrifugation and dried in a vacuum oven at 100 °C for 5 h for the next adsorption batch.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Material characteristics

The regular crystalline morphology of the as-synthesized MIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, MIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and MOF(Ni)-NH₂ was shown in **Figure S1**. Similar features were also noticed in

CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ morphology (**Figure S2**). The synthesized MIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and MIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ possessed similar PXRD patterns to simulated MIL-53 and MIL-88 (Seoane et al., 2013; Yi et al., 2020), as shown in **Figure S3**. This indicated that -NH₂ groups had little effect on the integrity of the frameworks. After carbonization, the embedded Fe, Al and Ni in CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ were transformed into crystalline α -Fe₂O₃, NiO and γ -Al₂O₃, respectively (**Figure S4a**). On the other hand, only NiO and Fe₃O₄ phases were identified from the XRD patterns of CMOF(Al/Ni 1/1)-NH₂ and CMOF(Fe/Al 1/1)-NH₂, respectively (**Figure S4b**), indicating the possible amorphous state of Al or doping of Al atoms in NiO and Fe₃O₄ lattice, consistent with previous study (Aghazadeh et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2018; Siddique et al., 2018; Ehsani et al., 2019). CMOF(Fe/Ni 1/1)-NH₂ consisted of both Fe₃O₄ and NiO phases, but it's worth noting that introduction of Al or Ni led to the formation of Fe₃O₄ in bimetallic CMOF(Fe/Al 1/1)-NH₂ and CMOF(Fe/Ni 1/1)-NH₂, in contrast to α -Fe₂O₃ in CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂. Similar "missing" phase of Al was also observed in CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ (**Figure S4c**). However, the PXRD pattern of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ consisted of a mixture of α -Fe₂O₃, Fe₃O₄, NiO and γ -Al₂O₃, indicating the influence of metal element composition on the final structure of CMOFs-NH₂. Monometallic and trimetallic CMOFs-NH₂ were used for further experiments.

The formation of crystalline metal oxides was confirmed by TEM images (**Figure S5**). The nanocrystals of NiO, γ -Al₂O₃, α -Fe₂O₃ and Fe₃O₄ in CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ were well mixed at a sub-50-nm scale. The chemical states of the samples, as characterized by XPS spectra (**Figure S6**), also showed the formation of the metal oxides mentioned above.

Bimetallic metal oxides, including NiFe_2O_4 , FeAl_2O_4 , NiAl_2O_4 and FeAlO_3 could also be possible forms of the metal elements. However, synthesis of NiFe_2O_4 usually requires hydrothermal method (Satyanarayana et al., 2003; Zhou et al., 2005) or extended annealing time (Srivastava et al., 2009; Li et al., 2019), while the PXRD patterns of FeAl_2O_4 (Maiti et al., 2016), NiAl_2O_4 (Li et al., 2019) and FeAlO_3 (Santos et al., 2018) matched poorly with that of $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Al}/\text{Ni } 8/7/5)\text{-NH}_2$ and $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Al}/\text{Ni } 1/1/1)\text{-NH}_2$. Other bimetallic oxides such as FeNi_2O_4 and AlFe_2O_4 could also be excluded since they failed to match the valence states of the elements. Therefore, the embedded metal atoms in $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Al}/\text{Ni } 8/7/5)\text{-NH}_2$ and $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Al}/\text{Ni } 1/1/1)\text{-NH}_2$ primarily formed crystalline structures of individual metal oxides.

EDS mapping showed the uniform distribution of dopant Fe, Al and Ni in $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Al}/\text{Ni } 8/7/5)\text{-NH}_2$ (**Figure S7**), consistent with the TEM images. The elemental composition of CMOFs-NH_2 was shown in **Table S2**. The metal element content ratios were generally consistent with their nominal ratios, while the total metal atomic percentage was kept ~ 12.5 at%. On the other hand, the O content varied from 24.5 at% for $\text{CMOF}(\text{Ni})\text{-NH}_2$ to 30.9 at% for $\text{CMIL-53}(\text{Al})\text{-NH}_2$. It is interesting to note that relatively lower O content was observed for Ni-containing CMOFs-NH_2 (e.g. 24.5 at% for $\text{CMOF}(\text{Ni})\text{-NH}_2$, 26.8 at% for $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Ni } 1/1)\text{-NH}_2$ and 24.7 at% for $\text{CMOF}(\text{Al}/\text{Ni } 1/1)\text{-NH}_2$) as opposed to their Fe- and Ni- containing counterparts (e.g. 30.7 at% for $\text{CMIL-53}(\text{Al})\text{-NH}_2$, 30.4 at% for $\text{CMOF}(\text{Fe}/\text{Al } 1/1)\text{-NH}_2$ and 30.9 at% for $\text{CMIL-88}(\text{Fe})\text{-NH}_2$). The difference was well accounted for by the stoichiometry of the embedded NiO , $\gamma\text{-Al}_2\text{O}_3$, $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ and Fe_3O_4 , indicating that the oxidation state of the carbon lattice was relatively independent from the embedded metals.

The BET surface areas of CMOFs-NH₂ were shown in **Table S3**, and the pore structures of CMOFs-NH₂ and AC were also characterized by nitrogen adsorption-desorption isotherms (**Figure S8**). CMOFs-NH₂ had mainly mesoporous (pore size > 20 Å) structures. CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had mesopores concentrated at 70 Å and 176 Å, respectively, indicating its hierarchically porous structure. The other CMOFs-NH₂ showed similar pore distribution features with peak pore size around 60-70 Å. Commercial AC also had mesoporosity concentrated at 36 Å.

3.2. Adsorption Kinetics

The adsorption kinetics of CMOFs-NH₂ were measured with 40 mg L⁻¹ initial dye concentration, with data shown in **Figure S9**. Fast MB and AR-73 uptake was observed between 0 and 10 min. Then the adsorption curves leveled off gradually. Generally, adsorption equilibrium was reached for both MB and AR-73 on CMOFs-NH₂ with 30 min, substantially faster than previously reported ZIF-67 derived Co-doped nanoporous carbon (Co/NPC-900) (Torad et al., 2014) and ZIF-8/dicyandiamide-derived nitrogen-doped porous carbon (Carbon-ZD) (Xu et al., 2017). On the contrary, AC showed no sign of reaching equilibrium within 90 min. The adsorption kinetic data of CMOFs-NH₂ for both MB and AR-73 followed pseudo second-order model (Equation 3) with $R^2 > 0.97$ shown in **Table 1**. On the other hand, the adsorption kinetics of the precursor MOFs-NH₂ for MB were also measured, with the data shown in **Figure S10** and fitted to pseudo first-order and pseudo second-order kinetic models in **Table S4**. Notably, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had an adsorption of 1.15 mmol g⁻¹ in 60 min, while under the same conditions MOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ only had 0.37 mmol g⁻¹, indicating that

carbonization is a feasible strategy to further enhance the adsorption rates of MOFs-NH₂.

When comparing the adsorption kinetics of different CMOFs-NH₂, it was interesting to notice that Ni-containing CMOFs-NH₂ showed preferentially high adsorption rates for MB, while Fe- and Al-containing CMOFs-NH₂ showed high adsorption rates for AR-73. Specifically, for MB adsorption, the initial adsorption rate v_0 followed the order CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ (37.22 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ (22.83 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ (16.75 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ (13.01 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (7.39 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) (Table 1). In contrast, for AR-73 adsorption, v_0 followed the order CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ (13.96 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ (8.02 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (5.08 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ (4.46 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹) > CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ (2.95 mmol g⁻¹ h⁻¹). Generally speaking, the differences in adsorption rates are attributed to the porosity of the adsorbents as well as the adsorbent-adsorbate interactions. In this study, similar BET surface areas and pore distribution were observed for the CMOFs-NH₂ except CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. Nonetheless, they still have substantially different adsorption rates, indicating that the adsorbent-adsorbate interactions were the primary contributor to the adsorption rates. On the other hand, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5) had the highest adsorption rates for both MB and AR-73, while CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ had only moderate adsorption rates, implying that the metal element composition had a substantial effect on the performance of trimetallic CMOFs-NH₂.

Table 1. Pseudo second-order kinetic parameters for adsorption of MB and AR-73 on CMOFs-NH₂ ($C_0 = 40 \text{ mg L}^{-1}$, pH=7).

Kinetic parameters		CMIL-88(F e)-NH ₂	CMIL-53(A l)-NH ₂	CMOF (Ni)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/ Ni 1/1/1)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/ Ni 8/7/5)-NH ₂
MB adsorption	q_e (mmol g ⁻¹)	0.35	0.25	0.83	0.51	1.21
	v_0 (mmol g ⁻¹ h ⁻¹)	13.01	7.38	22.83	16.75	37.22
	R^2	0.993	0.974	0.980	0.991	0.993
AR-73 adsorption	q_e (mmol g ⁻¹)	0.26	0.16	0.13	0.11	0.45
	v_0 (mmol g ⁻¹ h ⁻¹)	8.02	5.08	4.46	2.95	13.96
	R^2	0.988	0.989	0.996	0.976	0.998

On AC, the adsorption kinetics of MB and AR-73 followed pseudo first-order model (Equation 4), as shown by the $R^2 > 0.99$ in **Table S5**. In terms of actual dye removal and water treatment, despite the large adsorption capacities of conventional carbonaceous adsorbents, it usually took hours or even days for the adsorption equilibrium to be established because of the slow adsorption kinetics (Hameed et al., 2007; Islam et al., 2017). This leads to extended contact time to meet the water quality requirement and hence elevated cost. CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ achieved fast adsorption of 1.06 mmol g⁻¹ and 0.38 mmol g⁻¹ for MB and AR-73 within 10 min, respectively, which were 18 and 24 times higher than that of commercial AC (0.058 mmol g⁻¹ for MB and 0.016 mmol g⁻¹ for AR-73 in 10 min). This demonstrates that CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ is an efficient adsorbent for aqueous dye removal. Therefore, reduced retention time and capital cost could be expected by employing CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ in water treatment.

3.3. Adsorption Isotherms

The adsorption isotherms of CMOFs-NH₂ for MB and AR-73 were shown in **Figure 1a** and

1b. The isotherms were better fitted by Langmuir model ($R^2 > 0.98$) than Freundlich model, with the parameters shown in **Table 2**. The derived equilibrium adsorption capacities agreed well with those derived from the pseudo second-order kinetic model. For MB, the adsorption capacities of the various CMOFs-NH₂ followed the order CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ (1.49 mmol g⁻¹) > CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ (0.85 mmol g⁻¹) > CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ (0.56 mmol g⁻¹) > CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ (0.45 mmol g⁻¹) > CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (0.27 mmol g⁻¹). On the contrary, for AR-73, the adsorption capacities followed the order CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ (0.47 mmol g⁻¹) > CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ (0.27 mmol g⁻¹) > CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (0.17 mmol g⁻¹) > CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ (0.14 mmol g⁻¹) \approx CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ (0.13 mmol g⁻¹). It is noticeable that the two orders not only deviate vastly from each other, but also disagree with the order of BET specific surface areas. This again indicated that the number of adsorption active sites for CMOFs-NH₂ was determined by not only the specific surface area, but also the chemical nature of the adsorbent surface. Meanwhile, the orders of adsorption capacities were consistent with that of initial adsorption rate v_0 . CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ showed excellent adsorption capacity for both cationic MB and anionic AR-73, demonstrating CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ again as a versatile adsorbent. The adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was also 5 times higher than previously reported β -cyclodextrin functionalized magnetic nanoparticles (Zhou et al., 2016).

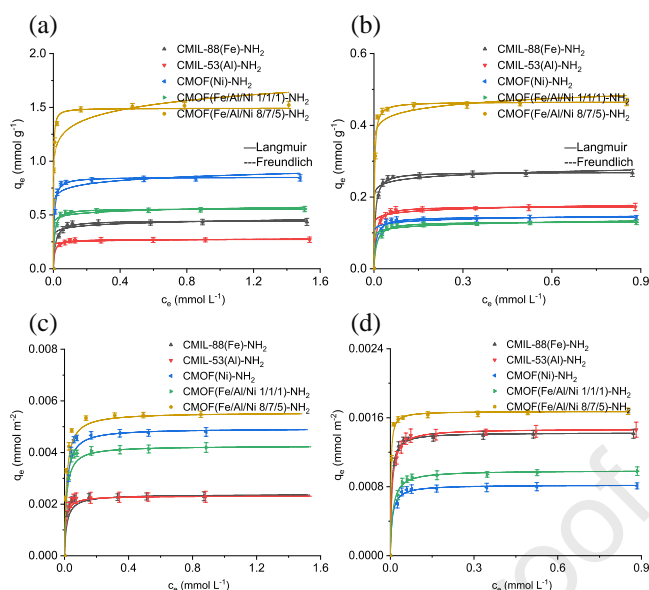


Figure 1. Adsorption isotherms of CMOFs-NH₂ normalized by the mass of adsorbents for (a) MB and (b) AR-73. The isotherms were fitted by Langmuir and Freundlich models. The adsorption isotherms were further normalized by the BET specific surface areas for (c) MB and (d) AR-73 to exclude the contribution of specific surface area to the adsorption capacities.

In order to exclude the contribution of specific surface areas and understand the effect of chemical nature of CMOFs-NH₂ surfaces on the adsorption capacity, the adsorption isotherms were normalized by BET surface areas in **Figure 1c and 1d**. The adsorption capacities of the various CMOFs-NH₂ for MB still followed the order CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ (5.36 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}$) > CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ (4.83 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}$) > CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ (4.23 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}$) > CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ (2.38 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}$) > CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (2.29 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}$). It's interesting to notice that Ni-containing CMOFs-NH₂ generally showed better adsorption capacity than their non-Ni-containing counterparts. On the other hand, the adsorption capacities for AR-73 following the order CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ (1.69 $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}$) > CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (1.44

$\mu\text{mol m}^{-2}) \approx \text{CMIL-88(Fe)-NH}_2 (1.43 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2}) > \text{CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH}_2 (0.98 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2}) > \text{CMOF(Ni)-NH}_2 (0.80 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2})$. Compared to the order obtained by normalizing the adsorption capacity to mass, it's easy to discover the exchanged positions of CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ with CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, as well as CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ with CMOF(Ni)-NH₂. The difference was because of the larger specific surface areas of CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ and CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ compared with CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂, respectively.

Table 2. Langmuir and Freundlich model parameters for adsorption of MB and AR-73 on CMOFs-NH₂ (pH=7).

Isotherm parameters		CMIL-88(Fe)-NH ₂	CMIL-53(Al)-NH ₂	CMOF(Ni)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH ₂
MB Langmuir constants	$q_m (\text{mmol g}^{-1})$	0.45	0.27	0.85	0.56	1.49
	$b (\text{L mmol}^{-1})$	80.19	127.88	192.68	151.52	680.27
	R^2	0.991	0.998	0.997	0.996	0.994
MB Freundlich constants	K_f	0.44	0.27	0.87	0.56	1.59
	n^{-1}	15.94	26.87	16.56	21.30	11.84
	R^2	0.959	0.988	0.948	0.976	0.920
AR-73 Langmuir constants	$q_m (\text{mmol g}^{-1})$	0.27	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.47
	$b (\text{L mmol}^{-1})$	234.19	161.81	147.28	115.07	531.91
	R^2	0.998	0.998	0.989	0.994	0.995
AR-73	K_f	0.28	0.18	0.15	0.13	0.49

Freundlich constants	n^{-1}	21.71	19.15	19.63	15.61	21.23
	R^2	0.982	0.985	0.972	0.976	0.958

For adsorption of both MB and AR-73, the adsorption capacities of the CMOFs-NH₂ still varied by a factor over 2 after normalized to the BET specific surface areas. Since the differences were attributed to adsorbent-adsorbate interactions, this indicated that different embedded metals in the CMOFs-NH₂ induced significantly different surface properties of the adsorbents. CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ showed the highest adsorption capacity with the adsorption capacity normalized to BET specific surface area, while the adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ was significantly inferior, indicating the importance of metal element composition for the adsorption performance of CMOFs-NH₂.

3.4. Effect of ionic strength and temperature on adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂

Since high salt concentration is often observed in industrial dye wastewater, the influence of salt concentration on the adsorption performance of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was studied (**Figure S11**). Specifically, the equilibrium adsorption of MB and AR-73 by CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was measured in the presence of NaCl or Na₂SO₄ with a dye concentration of 40 or 200 mg L⁻¹. As shown in **Figure S11**, NaCl and Na₂SO₄ in the concentration range of 0-0.2 M had no significant impact on the adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ for MB and AR-73. According to previous studies (Wang et al., 2010; Wu et al., 2014), this was because the dissolved salts screened the electrostatic interaction between CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ and

the dyes but also promoted the charging of the dye molecules, which finally canceled out and had little net effect on the adsorption capacity. On the other hand, the equilibrium adsorption of MB increased when the initial MB concentration was increased from 40 mg L⁻¹ to 200 mg L⁻¹. This was because of the enhanced mass transfer and stronger driving force of adsorption induced by the elevated MB concentration (Wu et al., 2014). However, increasing AR-73 initial concentration didn't increase the equilibrium adsorption amount, since the adsorbed amount with 40 mg L⁻¹ initial AR-73 (0.47 mmol g⁻¹) has reached saturation (**Table 2**). In the meantime, temperature also showed a pronounced effect on the adsorption capacity (**Figure S12**). The adsorption isotherms at different temperatures for both MB and AR-73 were all well-fitted by Langmuir model, as shown by the $R^2 > 0.99$ (**Table S6**). When the temperature increased from 298 K to 318 K, the adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ increased from 1.49 mmol g⁻¹ to 1.74 mmol g⁻¹. This implied that the adsorption processes are endothermic.

3.5. Adsorption mechanism of CMOFs-NH₂

Unraveling the adsorbent-adsorbate interaction and adsorption active sites is essential for the understanding and design of CMOFs-NH₂. In order to understand the adsorption mechanism of CMOFs-NH₂ for MB and AR-73, the influence of pH on the adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was measured with a dye concentration of 100 mg L⁻¹ (**Figure S13**). Increasing pH led to monotonic increase in the adsorption capacity for MB and decrease in that for AR-73, with sharp changes in the adsorption capacity observed in the pH range of 5-7. The adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ for MB at pH 13 (1.78 mmol g⁻¹) was about 5 times of that at pH 1 (0.34 mmol g⁻¹). Similarly, the adsorption capacity for AR-73 at pH 1

(1.05 mmol g⁻¹) was also about 5 times of that at pH 13 (0.22 mmol g⁻¹). The drastic change in adsorption capacity with varying pH indicated that surface charging may play an important role for the adsorption.

This was well-accounted for by the electrostatic interaction of dye molecules with the surface of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. MB, with a pK_a of ~3.1, takes on a singly charged cation form in solution with pH > 3.1, and gets protonated in acidic environment into doubly charged cationic form (Zhou et al., 2016). The two pK_a values of AR-73 were predicted to be -3.03 and 0.19 (Swain, 2012) by Chemicalize developed by ChemAxon, respectively, indicating the anionic form of AR-73 in the surveyed pH range. On the other hand, the charging of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ surface was studied by Zeta potential measurement (**Figure 2a**). CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had a Zeta potential of 4.89 mV at pH 5 and -25.34 mV at pH 7. Therefore, the PZC of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ could be determined to be ~5.3 by using linear approximation between pH 5 and 7. This implied that the surface of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was overall positively charged at pH below 5.3 and overall negatively charged at pH above 5.3. At acidic conditions, the positively charged surface had low affinity for positively charged MB because of electrostatic repulsion. Lower pH resulted in more positively charged CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ surface and stronger repulsion, leading to smaller adsorption capacity for MB. As pH exceeded the PZC, the surface of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ became negatively charged, leading to a sharp rise in its affinity for MB. Further increase in pH induced more negatively charged adsorbent surface and higher adsorption capacity. The adsorption behavior of negatively charged AR-73 was accounted for in the same way. Therefore, it was

concluded that electrostatic interaction played the utmost role in the interaction of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ with MB and AR-73.

Surface acid-base chemistry also provided insight into the roles of embedded oxides of Fe, Al and Ni. As shown by XRD, XPS and TEM, the embedded Fe in CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was in the form of α -Fe₂O₃ and Fe₃O₄, while Al was in the form of γ -Al₂O₃ and Ni in the form of NiO. The PZCs of the embedded metal oxides were summarized in **Table S7**. NiO, with a PZC as low as 3.5-4 (Hernandez et al., 2005), was negatively charged under neutral pH condition, which enabled it to possess high affinity to positively charged MB. On the contrary, γ -Al₂O₃ had a PZC as high as 8.5-9.5 (Ruiz-Reina et al., 2003; Moreau et al., 2013), rendering itself as a positively charged adsorption site at neutral conditions with high affinity to negatively charged AR-73. In terms of the embedded Fe, the PZC of α -Fe₂O₃ may range from 8.3-9.5 (Penners et al., 1986; Gunnarsson et al., 2000; Gunnarsson et al., 2001), similar to that of γ -Al₂O₃, while Fe₃O₄ had a circum-neutral PZC of 6.8-6.9 (Regazzoni et al., 1983; Blesa et al., 1984). Hence, at neutral pH condition Fe₃O₄ sites didn't contribute significantly to the adsorbent-adsorbate interaction, while α -Fe₂O₃ was expected to possess high affinity to AR-73. Therefore, it was speculated that the embedded NiO was the adsorption center for MB while the γ -Al₂O₃ and α -Fe₂O₃ were the adsorption centers for AR-73.

This hypothesis was confirmed by measuring the change in Zeta potential of CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ after dye adsorption (**Figure 2b-d**). The initial of CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ were determined to be 9.8, 9.8 and 3.6, respectively, consistent with the PZCs of α -Fe₂O₃, γ -Al₂O₃ and NiO,

respectively. Adsorption of MB induced only a minor change of the PZCs of CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂, indicating the weak electrostatic interactions. Since the adsorption of MB was contributed by both the embedded metal oxides and the carbon lattice, this implied that neither the embedded oxides of Fe and Al, nor the carbon lattice, had high affinity to MB. However, MB adsorption increased the PZC of CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ from 3.6 to 5.3, indicating the strong electrostatic interaction and the formation of inner-sphere complexes (Jordan et al., 2014). On the contrary, adsorption of AR-73 led to substantial decrease in the PZCs of both CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂ (from 9.8 to 8.2) and CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ (from 9.8 to 7.8), but no significant change in that of CMOF(Ni)-NH₂. This confirms that the embedded NiO in CMOFs-NH₂ functioned as adsorption centers for MB, while the α -Fe₂O₃, γ -Al₂O₃ functioned as adsorption centers for AR-73. The results also indicated that the carbon lattice didn't contribute significantly to the adsorption.

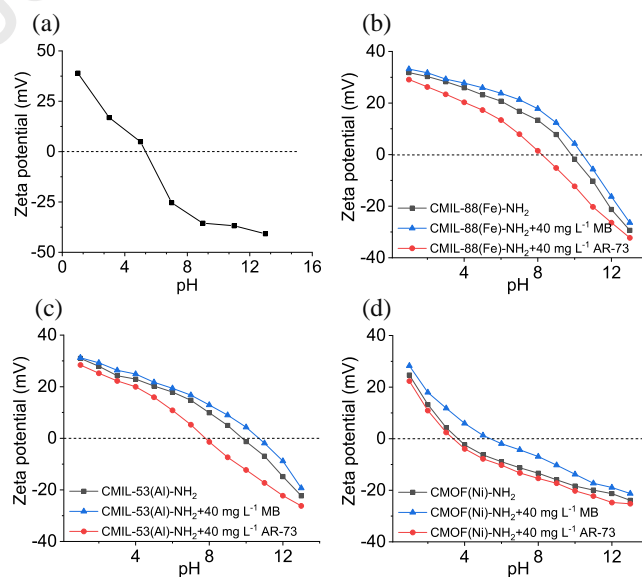


Figure 2. Zeta potential of (a) CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂, (b) CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, (c)

CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and (d) CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ as a function of pH.

In contrast to CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ that showed excellent adsorption performance for both MB and AR-73, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 1/1/1)-NH₂ failed to contain crystalline α -Fe₂O₃ and γ -Al₂O₃, leading to compromised adsorption rates and capacity for AR-73. This implied that the adsorption performance of CMOFs-NH₂ relied heavily on the formation of crystalline metal oxides with appropriate PZCs to function as active adsorption sites for the dyes. In addition, this also showed the significant tuning effect of metal element composition on the performance of formed CMOFs-NH₂.

In spite of the crystalline metal oxides being identified as the active adsorption sites in CMOFs-NH₂, this was unable to fully account for the outstanding adsorption performance of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. For example, according to **Table S2**, the mass fractions of Ni in CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ and CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ were calculated to be 39% and 10%, respectively. Since NiO was proposed as the adsorption site for MB, CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ should have better adsorption performance for MB than CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. In fact, this was not consistent with the experimental results in that CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ showed both higher adsorption capacity and faster adsorption kinetics for MB compared to CMOF(Ni)-NH₂. This might be due to the steric effect of MB, as shown in **Scheme S1**. Specifically, the positive charge of MB tends to be smeared out to the whole molecule due to the conjugation effect. At neutral pH, uniformly distributed negative charge of CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ would then lead to “side-on” adsorption of MB molecules, which could block more adsorption sites and lower the

efficiency of adsorption in general. In contrast, based on EDS mapping (**Figure S3**) and TEM (**Figure S5**) results, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had a heterogeneous surface with uniformly distributed hetero-charged sites, where negatively charged NiO sites were separated by positively charged γ -Al₂O₃ and α -Fe₂O₃ sites. The positively charged “dividers” on the surface favored the “end-on” adsorption because of their repulsion with positively charged MB molecules, thus facilitating the full usage of adsorption sites. As a result, despite the lower Ni content and less negatively charged sites in CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ compared to CMOF(Ni)-NH₂, a higher adsorption capacity was observed for the former. The similar adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ to CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ for AR-73 could be accounted for in the same way. This also implied that uniform distribution of hetero-charged sites to be an efficient strategy to enhance the adsorption capacity of carbon-based adsorbents.

3.6. Regeneration of Adsorbents

Ion leaching tests and adsorbent regeneration tests were performed to study the stability and reusability of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. Specifically, ion leaching tests were performed in 0.1 wt% CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ suspension at pH 4, 7 and 10 (**Figure S14**). The influence of MB and AR-73 adsorption on the ion leaching was studied with a dye concentration of 40 mg L⁻¹. Generally, the highest metal leaching was observed at pH 4 condition, and addition of MB (**Figure S14 d-f**) and AR-73 (**Figure S14 g-i**) to the suspension had no significant impact on the metal leaching. For all conditions, the leached metal concentration was well below 15 μ g L⁻¹ in 90 min. Therefore, the use CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ causes little heavy metal contamination. On the other hand, the metal leaching was also quantified based on the leached metal percentage

(Figure S14 j-l). At pH 4, only 0.07% Fe, 0.14% Al and 0.14% Ni were leached over 90 min. These results demonstrated CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ to be a highly stable adsorbent for MB and AR-73 over a wide pH range.

Furthermore, the used CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was successfully recovered using a magnet (Figure S15a). The adsorption capacity, which was measured in 100 mg L⁻¹ dye solutions, remained 89% and 95% over five consecutive batches for both MB and AR-73, respectively (Figure S15b), confirming the reusability of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ in practical applications.

Considering the large adsorption capacity, fast adsorption kinetics, high stability and applicability for both cationic and anionic dyes, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ may serve as a promising candidate for adsorptive removal of aqueous dyes and water remediation.

4. Conclusion

In this study, we studied the adsorption performance of MOF-derived ternary metal oxide embedded carbon for aqueous MB and AR-73 adsorption. CMOFs-NH₂ achieved quick adsorption-for both MB and AR-73, with equilibrium established within 30 min at neutral pH condition. Notably, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ obtained 18 and 24 times higher adsorption than commercial-AC in 10 min for MB and AR-73, respectively. Meanwhile, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ had the largest adsorption capacity for both MB (1.49 mmol g⁻¹) and AR-73 (0.47 mmol g⁻¹) compared to the other CMOFs-NH₂. At the same time, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ was demonstrated stable by < 0.15% metal ion leaching in the pH range of 4-10 in 90 min, and it

maintained 89% and 95% adsorption capacity for MB and AR-73 in five consecutive adsorption batches, respectively.

On the other hand, electrostatic interaction was identified as the primary interaction of CMOFs-NH₂ with the dyes. Based on the different PZCs and Zeta potential measurement, the embedded NiO was recognized as the negatively charged adsorption site for MB, while α -Fe₂O₃ and γ -Al₂O₃ were recognized as positively charged adsorption sites for AR-73. A uniformly distributed surface charge model was proposed to understand the exceptional adsorption capacity of CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂. In addition to dyes, CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂ may also serve as an efficient adsorbent for other aqueous ionic pollutants.

Author contribution statement

Menglin Yu: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Writing - review & editing. **Heng Dong:** Investigation, Formal analysis, Writing - Original drafting and validation. **Yingdie Zheng:** Investigation. **Weiping Liu:** Funding acquisition, Resources, Project administration, Supervision.

#M. Yu and H. Dong contributed equally to the work.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

Acknowledgment

495 This work was supported by National Natural Science Foundations of China (Grant No.
496 21777137). The authors would also like to thank China Scholarship Council for the support.

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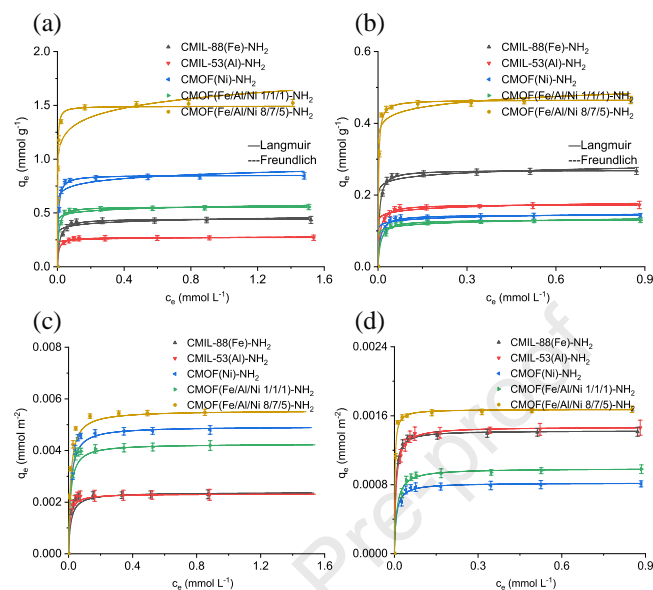


Figure 1. Adsorption isotherms of CMOFs-NH₂ normalized by the mass of adsorbents for (a) MB and (b) AR-73. The isotherms were fitted by Langmuir and Freundlich models. The adsorption isotherms were further normalized by the BET specific surface areas for (c) MB and (d) AR-73 to exclude the contribution of specific surface area to the adsorption capacities.

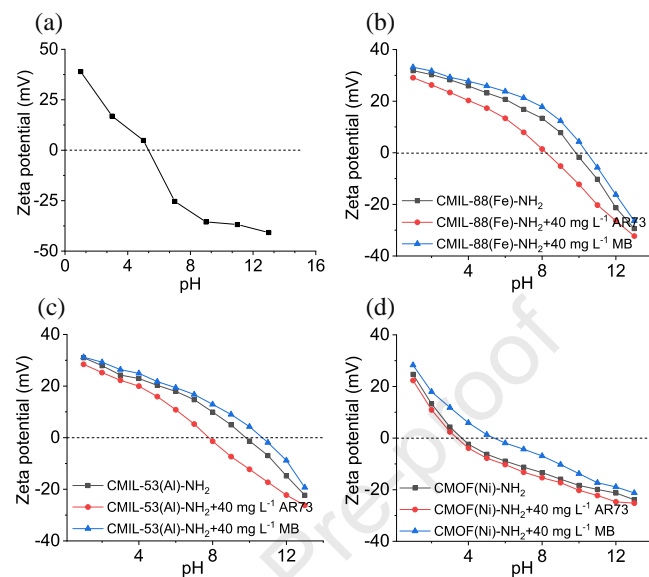


Figure 2. Zeta potential of (a) CMOF(Fe/Al/Ni 8/7/5)-NH₂, (b) CMIL-88(Fe)-NH₂, (c) CMIL-53(Al)-NH₂ and (d) CMOF(Ni)-NH₂ as a function of pH.

631 **Table 1.** Pseudo second-order kinetic parameters for adsorption of MB and AR-73 on CMOFs-NH₂ (C₀ = 40 mg L⁻¹, pH=7).

Kinetic parameters		CMIL-88(F e)-NH ₂	CMIL-53(A l)-NH ₂	CMOF (Ni)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/ Ni 1/1/1)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/ Ni 8/7/5)-NH ₂
MB adsorption	q _e (mmol g ⁻¹)	0.35	0.25	0.83	0.51	1.21
	v ₀ (mmol g ⁻¹ h ⁻¹)	13.01	7.38	22.83	16.75	37.22
	R ²	0.993	0.974	0.980	0.991	0.993
AR-73 adsorption	q _e (mmol g ⁻¹)	0.26	0.16	0.13	0.11	0.45
	v ₀ (mmol g ⁻¹ h ⁻¹)	8.02	5.08	4.46	2.95	13.96
	R ²	0.988	0.989	0.996	0.976	0.998

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Table 2. Langmuir and Freundlich model parameters for adsorption of MB and AR-73 on CMOFs-NH₂ (pH=7).

Isotherm parameters		CMIL-88(F e)-NH ₂	CMIL-53(A l)-NH ₂	CMOF (Ni)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/ Ni 1/1/1)-NH ₂	CMOF(Fe/Al/ Ni 8/7/5)-NH ₂
MB Langmuir constants	q _m (mmol g ⁻¹)	0.45	0.27	0.85	0.56	1.49
	b (L mmol ⁻¹)	80.19	127.88	192.68	151.52	680.27
	R ²	0.991	0.998	0.997	0.996	0.994
MB Freundlich constants	K _f	0.44	0.27	0.87	0.56	1.59
	n ⁻¹	15.94	26.87	16.56	21.30	11.84
	R ²	0.959	0.988	0.948	0.976	0.920
AR-73 Langmuir constants	q _m (mmol g ⁻¹)	0.27	0.17	0.14	0.13	0.47
	b (L mmol ⁻¹)	234.19	161.81	147.28	115.07	531.91
	R ²	0.998	0.998	0.989	0.994	0.995
AR-73 Freundlich constants	K _f	0.28	0.18	0.15	0.13	0.49
	n ⁻¹	21.71	19.15	19.63	15.61	21.23
	R ²	0.982	0.985	0.972	0.976	0.958

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Declaration of interests

☒ The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

☐ The authors declare the following financial interests/personal relationships which may be considered as potential competing interests:

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